

**MINUTES**  
**WOODSTOCK CITY COUNCIL**  
September 1, 2015  
City Council Chambers

The regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council was called to order at 7:00PM by Mayor Brian Sager on Tuesday, September 1, 2015 in Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Sager explained the consent calendar process and invited public participation.

A roll call was taken.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Daniel Hart, RB Thompson, Maureen Larson, Mark Saladin, Joseph Starzynski, Michael Turner, and Mayor Sager

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Roscoe Stelford, City Attorney Ruth Schlossberg, Finance Director Paul Christensen, Public Works Director Jeff Van Landuyt, Planning and Zoning Director Joe Napolitano, City Planner Nancy Baker, and Transportation Chairman Andrew Celentano.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Clerk Cindy Smiley

**FLOOR DISCUSSION**

**Public Comments**

Michael Stanard, 1524 Hillside Trail, Woodstock, provided a brochure which he created and which would market the Old Courthouse to the Council members. He stated he has given a lot of thought to marketing the Old Courthouse and wished to be proactive and so he created the aforementioned brochure. He described the brochure and the inserts that would accompany it, which would include a letter from the Mayor, demographics, a floor plan, and selected information about the building. He noted that this brochure is in line with the recommendations of the TAP, which felt that the building would best be suited to an educational use. He outlined for the Council some of the educational facilities to which the brochure could be directed. Mr. Stanard expressed his opinion that the Old Courthouse should house City Hall but that an educational facility would be a good use for the building also. He noted that the new Economic Development Director is coming from a powerful market and he feels it would be good to give him a brochure that would capture all of the wonderful things about Woodstock that cannot be captured anywhere else.

Mayor Sager thanked Mr. Standard for his passion and creativity.

Lydia Baltalbos, 621 Dean Street, Woodstock, stated she is not surprised that the City Council is looking at the Old Courthouse as a place for City Hall, stating that two of the Council members have publicly stated such. In response to a request that those Council members acknowledge their previous statements, M. Turner stated that he has expressed that idea but only conceptually. He stated that the City is far away from making that determination. Mayor Sager stated that he feels that this could be an option to consider but that the City is far from making a decision. He noted that an Advisory Board for the Old Courthouse will be appointed, which will provide an opportunity for input as to uses, etc. Ms. Baltalbos asked for assurances that there will be a process. Mayor Sager stated that this was a recommendation from the TAP and that next month Council will consider the formal formation of the Old Courthouse Advisory Board and the appointment of its members who will act in an advisory capacity.

In response to a question from Ms. Baltalbos concerning public participation, Mayor Sager noted that the Advisory Commission will be a public body.

In response to comments from Ms. Baltalbos concerning expenses and empty schools, Mayor Sager noted that the schools were built as a result of a public referendum and, further, that the school board makes the decisions with regard to the schools.

Ms. Baltalbos again questioned the process and past decisions, particularly the construction of schools. M. Turner stated that those decisions are made by the school board, not the City Council.

Ms. Baltalbos expressed her opinion that under no circumstances should City Hall be relocated to the Old Courthouse unless it is balanced out by an educational center featuring the Magna Carta. She also expressed her opinion that must be a process that is followed.

#### **Council Comments**

Mayor Sager stated he is saddened by the killing of the police officer in Fox Lake and extends the City's thoughts and prayers to that community and the officer's family.

RB Thompson noted that the Route 14 paving has dramatically improved and is coming along.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion by M. Saladin, second by M. Turner, to approve the Consent Agenda.

D. Hart requested the removal of item D-1.

A roll call vote was taken on Consent Agenda items A through D-8, with the exception of item D-1:

**A. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

August 4, 18015 City Council Workshop

**B. WARRANTS: 3678 3679**

**C. MINUTES AND REPORTS:**

Building and Zoning Report – July 2015

Human Resources Report – July 2015

Human Resources Report – June 2015

Police Department Report – July 2015

Public Works Report – July 2015

Historic Preservation Commission Minutes – August 4, 2015

Library Board Minutes – July 9, 2015

**D. MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 52**

**2. Façade Improvement** – Approval of the allocation of Façade Improvement Funds in the amount of \$3,600.00 for 230 Washington Street.

**3. Zoning Variation** – Adoption of Ordinance 15-O-51, identified as Document No. 2, varying provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance for property located at 309 McHenry Avenue.

**4. Quit Claim Deed – 203 – 223 Main Street-** Approval of the following:

- a) Authorization to execute a Quit Claim Deed for 203-223 Main Street;
- b) Authorization to file this deed with McHenry County.

**5. Waiver of Competitive Bids and Award of Contract – Well #9 Maintenance –** Approval to waive the requirement for competitive bids and award of contract to Layne Christensen Company to provide materials, labor, and equipment to complete maintenance of Well #9 for a total estimated cost not to exceed \$33,721.

**6. Award of Contract – Custodial Services –** Approval of the award of contract for custodial services for City Hall, the Library, and the Recreation Center to the lowest responsible bidder, Mega Commercial Services, for \$4,288.00 per month for a two-year time period beginning October 1, 2015.

**7. Stormwater Management Ordinance –** Adoption of Ordinance No. 15-O-52, identified as Document No. 3, adopting the McHenry County Stormwater Management Ordinance as amended November 18, 2014 with the incorporation of various local amendments that favor more restrictive stormwater release rates and/or increased detention storage.

**8. Budget Amendments –** Adoption of Ordinance No. 15-O-53, identified as Document No. 4, which amends the City's FY14/15 Budget Ordinance.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson, M. Turner, and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Absentees: none. Abstentions: none. Motion carried.

D. Hart recused himself at 7:23PM.

**Item D-1 Liquor Amendment – On The Square, Inc.**

In response to a question from RB Thompson, Mayor Sager confirmed that the Manager of On The Square Inc. d/b/a Brickstone is a resident of the Woodstock.

Motion by M. Turner, second by J. Starzynski, to approve adoption of Ordinance 15-O-54, identified as Document No. 1, an Ordinance Amending Section 3.3.5, Classification of Licenses; Number and Fees of the Woodstock City Code, which would increase the number of Class A-6 liquor licenses by one, authorizing issuance to On The Square, Inc. d/b/a Brickstone and also reduce the number of Class A-6 liquor licenses by one to eliminate the additional inactive license held by the The Lopsen Group d/b/a Woodstock Public House for the same location, the net effect being no change to the total number of Class A-6 liquor licenses.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: M. Larson, M. Saladin, J. Starzynski, RB Thompson, M. Turner and Mayor Sager. Nays: none. Abstentions: None. Absentees: D. Hart. Motion carried.

D. Hart returned to the Chambers and rejoined the body at 7:25PM.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**Pavilion Analysis**

Calling attention to the staff report available in the packet, Mayor Sager turned the floor over to on

M. Turner as he had brought forth this idea for initial consideration.

M. Turner stated he appreciated staff's time and efforts in preparing the report and also the opportunity to bring this item before Council. He provided a brief history of how this concept came about, noting in discussions with Steve Gavers, the idea arose of investing in permanent infrastructure instead of expending funds each year for a large tent for the Barndance. The idea expanded to using this structure to house other events and activities in the community with the structure to be located in the downtown. He noted that there really is not an event venue of this type located in a downtown in a smaller community on the train line. M. Turner stated that a discussion of costs is getting ahead of things, as he wished to discuss the concept as something that would enhance the city.

M. Turner stated that he then discussed the concept with John Harris of a5 who stated that the pavilion would be one item, or domino, in a list of things that should be part of a Business Development Plan and a Downtown Business District Plan, with another domino being the Old Courthouse. It was his feeling that the City should determine what it is trying to be and what type of professional guidelines would be used in formulating the plan. Then, he noted, the pavilion could be a part of the plan. M. Turner stated he felt that this concept of a plan, a district, and a focus is very compelling and so he is now suggesting the development of a plan for the downtown. He indicated that suggestions from John Harris and the new Economic Development Director might be a first step. He would also like this to extend to what we are trying to accomplish for the community and would like the plan to follow a vision, parameter, strategy, and action path. He still is supportive of the idea but feels it needs to be done in a developmental approach and that the City needs to bring in someone who has expertise and experience in developing a plan.

RB Thompson stated that he feels there are two other dominoes, location of the fairgrounds because they are a large entertainment venue not now located within the City of Woodstock and build-out of Emricson Park so that Gavers would not have available space and would need a new venue.

D. Hart stated he would like to see a more comprehensive plan for the downtown as a whole before moving forward with the pavilion.

J. Starzynski stated there are a few things that should be developed before taking on a new pavilion project. He noted that the City is already involved in a few business ventures including the Opera House, the Old Courthouse, and the Merryman property on Rt. 14. He would like to see the Opera House utilized more and should be looked at more as a business with heavier utilization. He also noted that the City has many projects in the works and feels those should take priority before adding another project.

M. Larson stated that while she has a vision for the downtown, it is difficult to articulate. She feels that the pavilion idea is broad and transformational and would move the City toward a goal. She stated she does not believe the City would have to support the pavilion financially long-term, but that it could be self-sufficient. She noted, however, that the City already has a lot of projects to work on including getting a new Economic Development Director in place, the Old Courthouse Advisory Board, an Executive Director for the Old Courthouse, extension of the TIF, Real Woodstock, the Enterprise Zone, and the expansion of Aurora University. She stated this is a lot going on and would not want to do the pavilion in a way that just sticks it in the middle of that site but would rather get professional help in development of the downtown. She does not wish to place this on the back burner but would rather like to get a roadmap to recruit partners for this project. She feels that a downtown plan is a good first step and she would like to first focus on that.

M. Saladin stated that the pavilion idea is appealing but the reality is the City only controls a small portion of the property in question. He noted there are a lot of site issues including eating up development space on Woodstock Station, traffic, and noise to name a few. He feels there is some interest in this property which would be a better fit that would generate long-term income with more people living near the Square. He was also taken aback by the cost, but was intrigued by the other sites. He stated that the Rt. 14 site has great potential for growth. He also noted that the Emricson Park site is interesting in that it could include an amphitheater effect. He stated he feels that it is good to plan things out and is fine with a discussion but thinks that Council should move past the downtown site and work on the other downtown projects already in the works.

Mayor Sager stated he feels that this project has all the right intent of bringing people to the community and is appreciative of the report prepared by staff, noting that it provided a good foundation and helped formulate the process. He further stated that he agrees with Councilman Starzynski and Councilwoman Larson that the City has a lot on its plate right now. He stated it is also very difficult not to take the financial obligations into consideration. He noted this does not mean that the City should not be looking at this project at some point. Mayor Sager also agreed that the City should have a Downtown Development Plan that would provide a vision and direction for that area and concurs with Councilman Saladin that the City should not consider only one location. He stated that while this is a great vision and very bold, he sees this as a longer term project based upon everything else that is going on and that he is not comfortable with it in the short term.

M. Turner stated that there have been changes in the economy and in urban planning. He also noted that millennials need housing units and stated that all these things should be considered when developing a Downtown Plan. He stated that John Harris is familiar with firms that deal with cities of Woodstock's size that are located in the Midwest who could provide guidelines, bringing multi-city experience. He suggested that Mayor Sager and City Manager Stelford have an informal conversation with John Harris to gain Mr. Harris' insights.

Mayor Sager opened the floor to public comment.

John McNamara, 13 North Street, stated he is the owner of one of the brownstones at Woodstock Station. He stated he appreciates all of the comments made this evening and that the Homeowners' Association has met to seriously discuss this concept. He noted that they were ready to voice their thoughts this evening but things have changed based upon Council's comments so they will not venture into their rationale as to why the pavilion should not be built at this site and why an alternate site should be found. He further stated that his group understands the need to develop a comprehensive vision that can be used going forward with the new Economic Development Director. He stated they will be supportive of participation in the planning process. He noted they are very concerned about the concept of Woodstock Station and feel that the original was an excellent transit-oriented concept. He stated that now, with the market recovering, there is some interest in Woodstock Station again and, with that in mind, they will voice support of what Council has discussed this evening. He noted that with build-out, that could mean another 300 to 400 residents who would support the Square and all of Woodstock and help retire the debt. He asked that Council remember that the HOA of Woodstock station would like to be a part of that and be actively involved.

Mayor Sager thanked them for their involvement. He continued by saying that the City's new Economic Development Director who will be joining the staff next week will assist in a lot of ways to help forward downtown development and development of the community at large.

Tom Dougherty, 17601 Streit Rd., Harvard, stated that when he first mentioned the pavilion project, it was in light of a comprehensive development plan. He noted that Ravinia is a great venue and feels that Woodstock could be Ravinia West. He asked how we can recognize Woodstock for the great place it is and feels that we sell ourselves short. Mr. Dougherty stated that MCC was just a vision at one time and now is a large community college serving thousands. He noted that we must believe in a project and make it happen in much the same way MCC happened. He stated that the Square is unique and presents a lot of opportunity but that we must look forward. He noted he is interested in making a change and discussed how to begin, noting his beginnings as a businessman in the community and how his businesses have grown. He is pleased that the City is going to develop a really viable downtown district. He stated he is of the belief that the Council has the fortitude and stamina to take on a project like this and see it through and thanked the Council for what they are doing.

Mayor Sager thanked Mr. Dougherty for his investment in the community.

Terry McKenna, 11 North Street, Woodstock, stated that it is his opinion that this particular venue in this location would not get the city where it needs to be. He noted the City does not need a venue with no foreseeable revenue. He feels there are things the City needs but not this pavilion in this location.

M. Turner stated the staff report does not recognize any discussion of possible revenue such as ticket sales, concessions, etc. He does not want to see property taxes go up to support this venue and stated the intent is for the venue to be revenue neutral at a minimum. He feels that it could be cash positive and not be operated by the City but rather by another entity that would run it at a profit. He noted it would be owned by the City but operated by another entity and not subsidized.

Mr. McKenna noted that the parking structure would require a huge subsidy and that Ravinia would be the competition for this venue.

M. Turner noted that the concept was not for a seated venue and is very preliminary.

In response to the comment by Mr. McKenna that people who go to Ravinia do not go to restaurants or area businesses, M. Turner stated that the downtown concept would be to take advantage of our best transportation mode. He stated that it is his opinion there is more potential to attract people to Woodstock to spend money in the area.

Mayor Sager thanked Mr. McKenna noting his financial concerns are valid.

Laura Witlox-Middaugh, 27 North Street, Woodstock, stated she has a background in event planning and tourism in McHenry County, detailing that experience for the Council. She noted from personal experience that this would be an enormous task and expense and detailed what the tasks involved would be. She compared this to the concerts that were organized at Galt airport which eventually led to that facility's bankruptcy. It is her opinion that a minimum of 30 events per year would be required to cover the debt service on the facility, noting this makes the location impractical. Stating that the location is her backyard, she expressed concerns about the aftermath of the events.

Ms. Witlox-Middaugh noted that Ravinia has strict no-compete rules for their performers which would make it difficult to obtain performers of that caliber at the proposed venue. She provided information about costs of acts and booking procedures and the expense involved.

While Ms. Witlox-Middaugh is in favor of developing Woodstock, she expressed her opposition to continuing the process with the thought of placing the venue on Woodstock Station. She thanked Council for the opportunity for public comment and expressed support for Mayor Sager in all he has done for Woodstock.

M. Saladin expressed appreciation for those who spoke from unique perspectives.

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no items added to the further agendas.

**ADJOURN**

Motion by M. Larson, second by RB Thomspon, to adjourn this meeting of the Woodstock City Council to the next regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 2015, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Ayes: D. Hart, M. Larson, M. Saladin, Joseph Starzynski, RB Thompson, M. Turner, and Mayor Sager. Nays: None. Absentees: None. Abstentions: None. Meeting adjourned at 8:11PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley  
City Clerk